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## The role of English in shaping the linguistic landscape of Paris, Berlin and Kazan

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### Abstract

The paper examines the linguistic cultural landscape of three European cities: Paris (France), Berlin (Germany) and Kazan (the Republic of Tatarstan, Russian Federation). The subject of the analysis is the impact of the English language as an international communication agent on the development of the linguistic landscape in these cities.

Each of these capital cities has its own language policy that aims at preserving their unique national heritage: language and culture. The Republic of Tatarstan is twice-challenged as there are two official languages in the region – Russian and Tatar, both carefully preserved. However, the process of globalization affects the development of each European country; and the role of English in the linguistic landscape development is becoming increasingly important. This is reflected in the names of companies, shops, cafes and other ergonyms. Here linguists meet the challenge of the correct translation of the borrowed lexical units. The research seeks to facilitate and improve the translation accuracy of ergonyms by adapting the experience of other cities.

The findings of the authors contributed not only to the extension of the corpus of ergonyms, particularly those originating from the English language but first and foremost to the promotion of the positive international image the city of Kazan. This predominately comparative study made it possible to collect and critically analyze best practices of preservation and promotion the native language and culture in France, Germany and Russia to adopt them in Kazan, which aims to become an integral part of Europe.

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## 1. Introduction

At present in the era of globalization we get involved in the process of interference and interpretation of different cultures. This process finds its way in the linguistic changes such as appearance of a considerable amount of foreign words (borrowings), their implementation and usage by native speakers (mother-tongue speakers) and these borrowings fixation in the (national) language of the country in a short span of time. First of all new alien words widen the lexical-semantic groups related to developing spheres of social life such as science and engineering (information technology, in particular), economics and finance, mass culture, sports, politics and government, medical industry.

## 2. Analytical Framework

Certainly the advertising area as a part of marketing communication is more susceptible to changes than other spheres. The thematic justification is beyond question due to the fact that the subject of the analysis is a linguistic landscape understood as visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region: from road signs, sign-boards, advertising hoardings to street nameplates. The analysis reflects a surge in interest in language contacts, borrowings lexical formatives adaptation to the recipient language.

We would like to draw your attention to the fact that sociolinguists, sociologists and urbanists began to analyse linguistic landscape recently, but nevertheless the study is rapidly developing. According to Mark Sebba linguistic landscape has been described as being "somewhere at the junction of sociolinguistics, sociology, social psychology, geography, and media studies". And the field of study is relatively new; "the linguistic landscapes paradigm has evolved rapidly and while it has a number of key names associated with it, it currently has no clear orthodoxy or theoretical core" (Sebba, 2010:73). However in spite of its rapid development this study hasn't received its own canon and scientists draw conclusions from their empirical evidence analysis. As it is well known the linguistic landscape provides insights into the correlation of forces and status of multilingual states.

That's why we singled out three regions that could provide much food for thought for sociolinguists. These are France, Germany and the Republic of Tatarstan (in the Volga region of the Russian Federation). In France there is the remarkable Toubon Law that has come in for criticism for its impact on French regional languages and dialects that are endangered. Germany is facing problems concerning its debatable immigration policy and, consequently, the integration of immigrants into the German language and culture. As for the Republic of Tatarstan it is a spectacular example of successful and peaceful co-existence of two official languages that render a special touch upon the region and its language policy.

## 3. Literature Review

Linguistic landscape is the "visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region" (Landry and Bourhis 1997:23). Linguistic landscape has been described as being "somewhere at the junction of sociolinguistics, sociology, social psychology, geography, and media studies". It is a concept used in sociolinguistics as scholars study how languages are visually used in multilingual societies.

The languages used in public signs indicate what languages are locally relevant, or give evidence of what languages are becoming locally relevant (Kasanga 2012). In many multilingual countries, multilingual signs and packaging are taken for granted, especially as merchants try to attract as many customers as possible or people realize that they serve a multilingual community.

## 4. Findings and discussion

Research shows that out of the three the most vivid example of language preservation policy is France, which will serve as a basis for our discussion of the influence of the English language on the linguistic landscape of the European countries in question.

#### 4.1. Paris, France

The Toubon Law (full name: law 94-665 of 4 August 1994 relating to usage of the French language) is a law of the French government mandating the use of the French language in official government publications, in all advertisements, in all workplaces, in commercial contracts, in some other commercial communication contexts, in all government-financed schools, and some other contexts. The law does not concern private, non-commercial communications, such as non-commercial web publications by private bodies. It does not concern books, films, public speeches, and other forms of communications beyond commercial activity. The law takes its common name from Jacques Toubon, who was Minister of Culture when it was passed, and who proposed the law to the National Assembly of France. The law can largely be considered to have been enacted in reaction to the increasing usage of English in advertisements and other areas in France.

However, in spite of this law the English language influence on Paris linguistic landscape has become remarkable, heralding the era of *Franglais* in the French language and culture and is widely discussed by linguists.

Existing since 1959 and created by Max Rat the *Franglais*, the term refers to the use of English words sometimes regarded as unwelcome imports or as bad slang. An example would be *le week-end*. Though it is often used in many French dialects, the Quebecois would use *la fin de semaine* (literally: the end of the week) instead (while *fin de semaine* in France refers to the end of the work week, i.e. Thursday and Friday). *Franglais* also refers to nouns created from Anglo-Saxon roots, often by adding *-ing*, *-ment* at the end of a popular word—e.g., *un parking* (a car park or parking lot; *un stationnement* in Quebec French), *un camping* (a campsite), or *un shampoing* (shampoo, but pronounced [ʃɑ̃pwɛ̃], not \*[ʃɑ̃pu.ɪŋ]). A few words that have entered use in French are derived from English roots but are not found in English at all, such as *un relooking* (a makeover) and *un rugbyman* (a rugby player). Others are based either on mistaken ideas of English words (e.g. *footing* meaning jogging, not a pediment, and *tramway* meaning tram, not a tramway, and *bitch* which is widely believed by French speakers to mean a prostitute). There are also erroneous borrowings from English grammar: the formation of the plural of the noun (e.g. *un pin's* (with the apostrophe in both singular and plural) meaning a collectable lapel pin) or word order (e.g. *talkie-walkie* meaning a walkie-talkie, a hand-held two-way radio). For those who do not speak English fluently, such words may be believed to exist in English. (Note, however, that in Quebec, where both English and French are spoken, expressions such as *footing* and *relooking* are not used.)

Public authorities such as the Académie française and the Conseil supérieur de la langue française generally propose alternative words for anglicisms. The recognition of such vocabulary varies considerably; for example, *ordinateur* and *logiciel* existed before the English words *computer* and *software* reached France, so they are accepted (even outside France in the case of *ordinateur*). On the other hand, *vacancelle* failed to replace *weekend* or *fin de semaine* (the latter being in current usage in Canada). The noun *courriel*, a substitution for *e-mail* initially proposed by the Office québécois de la langue française, is increasingly coming into use in written French. However, most French Internet users generally speak about mail without the prefix *e-*. Note that English words are often shorter, and they are usually coined first (the French alternatives are generally thought of only after the original word has already been coined, and are then long debated before coming into use). This is partly why they tend to stay in use.

Alternative words proposed by the Académie française are sometimes poorly received by professional (often technical) audience and unclear to a non-technical audience. The proposed terms may be ambiguous (often because they are artificially created based on phonetics, thus hiding their etymology) which results in nonsense (e.g. *cédéroms réinscriptibles* for CD-RW (literally rewritable CD-ROMs, despite ROM meaning read-only memory). Some words are considered uncool (for example, adding the initial T to *chat* to form *tchat* (in accordance with French phonetics) or rendering DVD as *dévidé* (reproducing the French pronunciation of the letters D, V & D).

The use of English expressions is very common in the language of the young generation, which combines them with *verlan*. *Verlan* is an argot in the French language, featuring inversion of syllables in a word, and is common in slang and youth language. It rests on a long French tradition of transposing syllables of individual words to create slang words. The name *verlan* is an example: it is derived from inverting the sounds of the syllables in *l'envers* ("the inverse," pronounced *lan-ver*). The example of combination is the letter J that is thus sometimes humouristically

pronounced in the English way in words such as *jeunes* (youth), rendered *asdjuns* and thus written *djeun's*, to refer to this trend.

The *Franglais* term first appears on the pages of *France-Soir* that was a French daily newspaper. One of the reasons of this phenomenon was the regression of the traditional Latin and Greek learning system. But the main factor was the English language hegemony as an agent of international communication and its capacity for mimicry. The younger generation use English in view of its prestige to struggle the prejudice of the mother tongue.

Nevertheless in France the English language status situation is ambiguous. Is it worth speaking of the Anglicism invasion into French? The Académie française says, “No.” In the words of academician Patrick Vannier the “invasion” term is exaggerated in this context. “That’s a stretch to talk about English words invasion into French. English linguistic borrowing become a commonplace

- up to 1700: *ajourner*, *boulingrin*, *contredanse*, *gentleman*, *gentry*, *groom*, *lord*, *lord-maire*, *paquebot*, *yard*, *yeoman*;
- from 1700 till 1800: *anesthésie*, *balbuzard*, *bas-bleu*, *gin*, *méthodisme*, *pickpocket*;
- from 1800 to 1850: *autobiographie*, *bifteck*, *cold-cream*, *job*, *mess*, *pickles*, *silicium*, *sinécure*, *speech*, *steamer*;
- from 1850 to 1900: *base-ball*, *building*, *dribbleur*, *goal*, *lift*, *lunch*, *visualiser*;
- from 1900 to 1920: *autocar*, *chewing-gum*, *crawl*, *vamp*, *vitamine*;
- from 1920 or 1940: *break*, *bulldozer*, *chips*, *covalence*, *dévaluer*, *holding*, *ionosphère*, *mescaline*, *méson*, *oscar*, *show*, *technicolor*;
- from 1940 to 1960: *baffle*, *diariste*, *jet*, *marketing*, *offshore*, *pergélisol*, *permafrost*, *pop*, *sexy*, *station service*;
- since 1960: *audit*, *codon*, *cutter*, *jogging*, *kart*, *patch*, *patchwork*, *permissif*, *pesticide*».

(<http://www.slate.fr/story/69533/francais-anglais-angliscismes-franglais>)

We have to point out that the French society preserves mother tongue not only on paper but promotes public interest in this question. Popular newspapers and magazines articles, Internet sites attract attention to the topical question of French language.

Certainly as for the outdoor advertising in despite of obligatory requirements to translate English words into French go-getters, advertising accounts and admen find new ways to circumvent restrictions, publishing the translation in small print after asterisk etc. Moreover industrial enterprises can create brand names in English, which helps them get around a law afterwards. The example of Bouygues Telecom is a case in point. This company started new service by the name of B&You without translation and without legal intervention.

#### 4.2. *Berlin, Germany*

As for Germany it is an extremely popular city for immigrants that’s why English is can be often heard or seen in the streets.

Since reunification in 1990 Berlin has turned into a very different city. These days the signs of posh shops and trendy bars adorn its streets. But alternative views are noticeable too. Graffiti is present even on the most expensively refurbished buildings and residents put up slogans to protest against their flats being refurbished and sold to new owners. This case study of the changing graphic environment shows that, despite the strong influence of commercial discourses, the public space remains an area of contestation between civil society, private businesses and the state. The particular approach to linguistic landscape we developed combines textual and visual analysis. This has enabled us to show how the linguistic landscape both reflects as well as shapes social change and urban development in Berlin’s unification. The statistics released in the Migration Report 2013 compiled by Germany’s Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and approved by the Federal Cabinet on 21 January 2015 show 1.23 million persons moved to Germany in 2013, the highest influx in 17 years. Expectedly it has an impact on the city linguistic landscape (<http://www.euractiv.com/sections/global-europe/berlin-reacts-germanys-2013-record-immigration-numbers-311464>). And there are two famous organizations trying to determine the language policy of the society: “Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache” and “Verein Deutsche Sprache”.

It should be mentioned that similar to the phenomenon of *Franglais* in France, there is *Denglisch* in Germany. The term “*Denglisch*” has several different meanings. Since the word “*Denglis(c)h*” is not found in German dictionaries (even recent ones), and “*Neudeutsch*” is vaguely defined as “*die deutsche Sprache der neueren Zeit*”

("the German language of more recent times"), it can be difficult to come up with a good definition. But here are five different definitions for Denglisch (or Denglish):

Denglisch 1: The use of English words in German, with an attempt to incorporate them into German grammar. Examples: downloaden - ich habe den File gedownloadet/downgeloadet. - Heute haben wir ein Meeting mit den Consultants.

Denglisch 2: The (excessive) use of English words, phrases, or slogans in German advertising. Example: A recent German magazine ad for the German airline Lufthansa prominently displays the slogan: "There's no better way to fly."

Denglisch 3: The (bad) influences of English spelling and punctuation on German spelling and punctuation. One pervasive example: The incorrect use of an apostrophe in German possessive forms, as in Karl's Schnellimbiss. This common error can be seen even on signs and painted on the side of trucks. It is even seen for plurals ending in s. Another example is a growing tendency to drop the hyphen (English-style) in German compound words: Karl Marx Straße vs Karl-Marx-Straße.

Denglisch 4: The mixing of English and German vocabulary (in sentences) by English-speaking expats whose German skills are weak.

Denglisch 5: The coining of faux English words that are either not found in English at all or are used with a different meaning than in German. Examples: der Dressman (male model), der Smoking (tuxedo), der Talkmaster (talk show host). (Flippo Hyde <http://german.about.com/od/vocabulary/a/denglish.htm>)

Denglisch is often used in advertisements in Germany, where English words and phrases appear, sometimes used in a way which is different from standard English.

Many of Berlin outdoor advertisement pieces have captions written in English; this way business people also appeal to tourists and immigrants.

1) food service companies: Glass, The Bird, 5 Elephant, The Barn, First Floor, Grill Royal, Good Time, Austria, Hot Dog Soup

2) Clubs: Watergate, KitKat, White trash, Golden Gate, ://about blank, Suicide Circus, Cake

3) Hotels and Hostels: Their names in English are very popular, only 19 of 69 hostels advertised on Boking.com have their signboard in German. The others are in English, e.g. Cityhostel Berlin, Smarthotel & Hostel Berlin, St Christopher's Inn Berlin, Corner Hostel etc.

#### 4.3. Kazan. The Republic of Tatarstan

As regards Kazan it is a unique city that is a thousand years old. Kazan has a rich history and strategic geographic location on the cutting edge of Europe and Asia. This is a representative example of peaceful coexistence of two very different cultures and consequently of two official languages: Tatar and Russian. By the state languages Law of the Republic of Tatarstan (08.07.1992 # 1560-XII) both languages have equal rights. Kazan is one of the more economically developed regions of the Russian Federation. It has many landmarks which appeal to visitors. In 2013 tourist traffic was up by 25%. Kazan is a prosperous city. The greatest international sports events and cultural festivals were organized and scheduled here. And local linguists meet the new challenges concerning the correct translation of outdoor advertising units to create an authentic image of Kazan. These facts also contribute to the topicality and importance of our up-to-date study. As for Kazan linguistic landscape there are a lot of signs in English designed for young targeted audience such as desired environment and the qualitative targets of advertising sites:

1. food service companies: Light Cafe, Music Hall, All Time Bar, Cinema Cafe, ReLab Cocktail Bar, Selfie Bar, Marriott Roof Terrace, Extra Lounge, China-Town-Cafe, Forsing, Fleur, Rolling Stone Bar, CoffeshopCompany, Rombouts, Guinness pub, Chicago, Famous, Zilant Mediterranean Grill, Latte Art, Incorrect but intentional versions: Литл Бар (Littl Bar), Тринити(Trinititi), BEERЛЮЖА, I-Бар коктейль, Zilant Mediterranean Grill
2. Clubs: Out Hall, Sense, BioPort, T.E.A.T.R.O., The Legend, LUXOR, Ferz, Summer Jam  
Incorrect but intentional versions: Ferz (Queen)

### 3. Hotels and Hostels:

Hotel Art, Private Premium Apartments, Ramada Kazan City Centre, Luciano Residence, Ibis, Kazanskoye Podvorye Hostel,

Incorrect but intentional versions or transliteration:

Osobnyak na Teatralnoy

## 5. Conclusions

It goes without saying that in the era of globalization commitment to the native language and culture can hardly compete with the necessity to enter the world of international communication and, thus, the need to maintain a productive dialogue with the help of the global language. The use of English in advertising, trade, business and everyday life in France, Germany and Republic of Tatarstan is unavoidable and can be explained by the necessity to meet the requirements and expectations of the target audience, especially that of the young generation. But we wish to bring to your attention that to our mind the policy of promotion and preservation of the native language should and will never cease. The performed research allows us to conclude that in France this preservation policy is the most efficient in comparison to Germany or Tatarstan, Russian Federation. There is no doubt that Kazan and Tatarstan as a whole would like to maintain its traditional culture and languages, we would like to adopt the best practices but not to the detriment of common sense and progress.

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